

## Curtains and Glass by EmeraldTulip

**Category:** Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** F/M, Gen, One Shot, based on clips, takes place during that time overlap from season 1 and 2, will and lucas and dustin are all mentioned

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**Characters:** Eleven (Stranger Things), Karen Wheeler, Mike Wheeler

**Relationships:** Eleven/Mike Wheeler

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**Summary:**

*I killed the Bad Men, she thinks desperately. But they're still here. And if they find her, they'll kill her, and Mike, and Lucas and Dustin and Will. She has to run.*

## Curtains and Glass

### Author's Note:

wow, im really on a stranger things writing spree.  
this is an eleven piece with a dash of mileven and  
takes place after el defeats the demogorgon but  
before the boys visit will in the hospital. not much  
else to say, i guess, so enjoy!

She gasps as she slips through the sticky curtain stretching over the gap she's torn open, falling to the floor somewhere very familiar and *real*. She feels gross and slimy, but at least she knows she's not dead.

She thinks of Will, then, of how she'd only sensed him for a moment before he was gone, and it terrifies her because that can only mean two things: he's safe, or he's dead. For real, this time.

And then she thinks of Mike. Of Lucas and Dustin. How they're safe now, because the monster is dead and so is Papa.

She stumbles down the hallway of the school, aware she's leaving a snail's trail behind her but not caring. She remembers snails from something Papa made her do—the memory is faint, so many years old, but she can recall the salt and the wrinkly little things.

But she doesn't care about that right now. She falls against the doors, opening them and letting a blast of air hit her. It's clean, blessedly so even after barely an hour in the Upside-Down—as far as she can tell anyway. Who knows how time worked down there? Her stomach twists at the thought—if Will is alive, what's going to happen to him?

*Mike*, she thinks. *Mike will know*. So she runs despite her shaky legs, vaguely remembering the twisty path they'd traveled on the bikes not long ago. When she takes the final turn, however, she comes to a screeching halt as noise assaults her ears and lights flash through her vision. There are cars outside of Mike's house, all blinking lights and loud alarm sounds. For one horrible moment, she thinks that this must be Papa, he must still be alive, he must have gotten Mike.

Then she remembers the kind of person Papa was—quiet, stealthy, a silent evil. He wouldn't make such loud mistakes.

But still, noise means people, and she can't be seen. So she slips around the side of the house, searching for a different entrance. The back door is locked, and the windows are all blocked by curtains, but then she finds one where there's a sliver between the curtains. And when she looks through the glass, there's Mike.

"Please let me go," she hears him say, muffled through the window, but she strains because she needs to know what's happening. There are two people there, unfamiliar, clothes like that Chief man and shiny badges like that lady Papa was with. Like that bad lady—the one she killed.

"Please," Mike says again, and she can see that his eyes are red. "Will is in the hospital. He's hurt, badly, he could be *dying*, I don't *know*. Just let me go see my friend, *please*."

So she hasn't been gone for long at all.

"Being polite won't get you out of this, Michael," this new lady says. "You need to tell us everything. Where is the girl?"

"I don't know," Mike tells her again, desperate. "I don't know. Please..."

"Michael, I know this is hard," the man says. "But she's extremely dangerous and if you know where she is, you need to help us."

She's puzzled for a moment before she realizes that these people are talking about *her*. They want to know where she is. They want to take her all over again.

"I don't know," Mike says, voice sharp. "I don't know where she is. And even if I did, I would never tell you." There's a pause and she shifts slightly, not wanting to alert the older people to her presence but wanting to see Mike's face. It's bitter and cold, and his eyes are so much different than those she'd seen not too long ago. He practically spits the next words. "I would *never* tell you." Despite the circumstances, something warm blossoms in her chest because Mike

is still Mike, even after all this. He still cares about her.

The lady sighs as he resolutely looks away. “Your friends, those other two boys, said the same thing.”

*So Lucas and Dustin are okay*, she realizes, and she’s so relieved she almost falls over. They’re all alive.

But then Mike looks right at her, and she freezes.

If he knows she’s here, well, he’s not a good liar. If he knows she’s here, then the other people will, too. And these aren’t the Bad People, but she’s willing to bet that they’re people who are just as bad.

They can’t see her.

So she stands completely still, other than twitching a finger so that the light behind Mike turns slightly to send glare at her—she’d perfected the technique in the Lab, when Papa would shine those too-bright lights at her. The other two people look over, but by now she knows they can’t see her. She stands completely still until the lady moves in front of Mike to block his view.

“No funny business, Michael,” she says sternly, and El has made the decision that she hates the name Michael. She has to resist the urge to make that lady smack herself. “You need to tell us where she went.”

When Mike speaks, it just sounds like a wheeze of air. “No, I...”

She’s about to panic, because they’re going to check the window any minute now. But then, shockingly, Mike’s mother saves the day.

“Michael,” she says, walking briskly into the room. Everyone’s attention turns to her, so El takes the time to shrink away from the window and hide in the shrubbery below. She can still hear them.

“Ma’am,” the older man says, “With all due respect, this in an ongoing investigation and you have to leave. Your son—”

“Is my son,” she cuts him off succinctly. “And, frankly, I’m not sure the manner in which this investigation is being conducted is entirely

legal. Interrogating—sorry, *interviewing*—a twelve-year-old? He said he doesn't know where she is, and I *know* he hasn't been entirely honest with me the past few days, but I believe him."

El doesn't really know what that means, but she likes the authority in the voice she hears.

"Ma'am—"

"Michael," she says calmly, and El is suddenly reconsidering her earlier statement about hating the name. Coming from his mother's mouth, it doesn't sound nearly as hostile. "Lucas and Dustin's parents just called to say that their *interrogations* are over. Do you want to go see Will?"

"Yes, please," he says, sniffing like he's tearing up. His voice is meek, and El almost wants to cry herself. She hears a chair scrape, and then Mike's footsteps fade a little.

"Now you," Mike's mother hisses after a moment, clearly talking to the other people, "Get out of my house and get the *hell* away from my family."

They do, doors slamming and mutters filling the air, and Eleven knows that within minutes, those people will be looking for her. She wants to run to Mike, and her legs start to carry her around the side of the house, but the lights are still blazing and she retreats.

*I killed the Bad Men*, she thinks desperately. *But they're still here*. And if they find her, they'll kill her, and Mike, and Lucas and Dustin and Will. She has to run.

She can't tell them she's alive.

So she turns, runs before anyone can see her, and plunges into the woods. The noise fades, replaced by her panting and sticks breaking. Her lungs burn, and once she can't breathe at all anymore she falls against a tree, eyes stinging.

She's made her decision: Eleven is dead.

**Author's Note:**

im... so emotional. the season comes out literally tomorrow, guys. in just a few hours. im a little freaked, to be honest.

anyway. comments and kudos are, as always, appreciated.

find me on tumblr, my main is [@fivehargreeves](#) and my writing blog is [@lowriting](#)!